DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 226 401 EA 015 035

AUTHOR Oudkerk Pool, Theo
TITLE Curriculum Development in the Netherlands: A New Movement for Hypocritical Teaching.
REPORT NO ThOP/AF/Pc/82/S-298
PUB DATE 21 Mar 82
NOTE 9p.; Summarized paper for presentation at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (New York, NY, March 19-23, 1982).
PUB TYPE Viewpoints (120)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Classroom Techniques; *Curriculum Development; Educational Change; Educational Cooperation; Elementary Secondary Education; Foreign Countries; Inservice Teacher Education; *Interprofessional Relationship; Participative Decision Making; *Teacher Behavior; Teacher Participation; *Teachers
IDENTIFIERS *Netherlands

ABSTRACT

Curriculum development theory in the Netherlands, much emphasized in the last 10 years, has created problems for teachers but has also led to moves to have a school's teachers themselves, as a team, develop their own curriculum. The changes in curriculum development have been related to three changes in Netherlands education: consolidation of schools at both the elementary and secondary levels and changes in adult education. Problems have arisen because teachers are not trained in curriculum development and because they do not now work as teams in schools, but instead use their own practices in their own classrooms. This means that schools have new curriculum documents but old teaching practices--hence the "hypocrisy" in teaching. There is reason for optimism, however, because discussion of the three national changes has triggered discussion of schools' functions and society's needs. Netherlands education needs to be more humanistic, and for that, teachers need to teach more as school teams. To train teachers to function as teams, they are being given inservice training involving discussion of practices, games, actions to change practices, and consolidation of the changes. School practice now is 60 years behind current school theory, so changes will not be quick. (RW)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED226401

CURRICULUMDEVELOPMENT IN THE NETHERLANDS: A NEW MOVEMENT FOR HYPOCRITICAL TEACHING

BY

THEO OUDKERK POOL

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCES

THE NETHERLANDS

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Theo Oudkerk Pool

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Summarized paper for presentation at
Division B Invited Symposium
"Curriculum Theory in Four Countries:
A Description and Critique of Emerging Ideas"
AERA Annual Meeting, New York
21st March 1982

EA 015 035

Ladies and gentlemen:

I want to speak about
Curriculumdevelopment in The Netherlands
as a new movement for hypocritical teaching
I'll try to explain in twenty minutes why I mention the educational innovations in The Netherlands a new movement for hypocritical teaching.
I am sure you recognize some facts compared to your own situation.

What are the newest and most exciting new ideas concerning curriculum in The Netherlands, that is the first question. The answer is that the problem "How to develop a school-curriculum?" has been emphasized in The Netherlands in the last ten years, and that we know how to do that in theory, but that we don't really solve the problem in the practice.
In the Seventies we had a Curriculum-euforia and everyone expected the highest Good for the innovations of the school-practice. These feelings are somewhat decreased now.
Professors and students within the universities have studied and described in the last ten years a lot of nice stories about curriculumtheory and curriculumdevelopment. We know what happens in the international arena: for years and years we are familiar with all kinds of opinions from the United States, we know the movements in the United Kingdom, we discuss different points of view with people from European countries as West-Germany, Sweden, Denmark, and so on. We translate the main thoughts, developed in the Soviet Union.
I am sure we know all the main theories that you find in the world concerning the curriculum, and last but not least we have developed and we are still processing to do and to have our own ideas and theory.
Sure, that is okay, but . . .
But the language that the theorist uses to speak and to write about the curriculum and the development is so difficult and

so narrow-screened, that a common teacher doesn't understand any point and nearly realizes that the story is going on about education and schooling.

The common teacher has and feels a lot of objections to all facts that bears a slight likeness to some theory. The teachers are hard working people, but they have only the focus on the schoolpractice. The teachers are afraid too, because they never learned the skills to think about or to develop a curriculum, but now I mention you the most exciting new idea on curriculumdevelopment:

teachers themselves as a schoolteam have to develop their own schoolcurriculum.

The assumption is that they can do this job, and even in the new educational laws this task has been formulated.

And that is another aspect you have to know when I speak about educational events in The Netherlands: the big movements of curriculumdevelopment in the last ten years can only be understood in relationship with educational changes on a national scale.

These changes in education concern

first, the change in the basic education we get in 1985: the nursery school and the elementary school will be combined to one educational system that we call the basic school for the four to twelve years old children;

second, the change in secondary education we get in 1990: the multistreaming secondary schools will be changed to one educational system that you can compare with the comprehensive school as in Sweden, England and so on. This comprehensive school or better the continued basic school is for the twelve to fifteen/sixteen years old students

and as third change: a better-ruled system for adult education from Open School-basics to Open University.

These political issues are in full development and in the statements of the New Education Law the teachers have to work out the schoolcurriculum and to be responsable for a

consistent schoolpractice.
The underlying thinking is good: to enlarge the involvement of the teachers to the curriculumdevelopment, but I mention this whole action the newest fairy-tale of educational innovations because some main conditions are not fulfilled.
One condition I mentioned before: in The Netherlands teachers are not trained to develop a curriculum. They haven't the skills and the knowledge. So first we need a big, big inservice training to give them the necessary tools.
But there is another main condition: the development of a school-curriculum can only be based on teamwork. As elsewhere teachers in The Netherlands work together in a school, six, eight teachers till twenty and more.
They work together. That means they are in the same school-building with their own groups of children. But a real tèam, no forget it! Each teacher has an own schoolpractice responsability and wants to do a lot of work to learn the kids the main basic skills and facts. Each teacher has a large autonomy and is as a lord in his (or her!) classroom.
Summarized shortly: each teacher has a private practice and gives a specific and personal intention to the actual curriculum without strong connections to the activities of the other teachers in the school.
Of course there are general systems of schoolagreements, but in the schools we don't have a good functioning intern control. In the schoolpractice the teacher can be a Robinson Crusoe in his or her own style: kindly, frankly and honestly.
The condition for the development of a curriculum has not been fulfilled:teachers together are not a team. So the newest most hot-dated idea concerning curriculum is "How can we make a team as we have a collection teachers in the school?". Or in other words: "How can we change the private practice to a collective practice?"

The second question Elliot Eisner proposed is: To what extent have these ideas influeneced practice?
If so, how; if not, why not?

When I visit a school in The Netherlands -and I mean a basic school because in secondary education my question would be nearly understood- I ask often "What about your school-curriculum?". This good question activates as soon as possible the headmaster and his or her teachers. They show the visitor a lot of curriculum-documents wherein has been formulated

* the very nice aims and nice goals of the schooleducation
* the ways of teaching and learning
* the varieties of learning contents
* the principles of assessment, and so on

And all the thoughts are based on the assumption that there have to be continuity between the schoolactivities of the teachers and the development of the children.

But the curriculumdocuments are nice theory. If you observe the teachingactivities afterwards in the classroom and you see again the private practice, then you realize that the theory of curriculum-development has overpowered schoolpractice. Teachers have developed in the last two, three years a school-curriculum, but it is 'teaching on paper'. They are glad to show you the documents, but behind the classroomdoor nothing really changed. They think they have a good theory, but the private practice is still going strong: that is the point why I mention the curriculumdevelopment in The Netherlands a new movement for hypocritical teaching.

You can ask me: "Is your thinking a kind of doomthoughts?" I think no, I am not a doomthinker but a realist, and there is hope too.

First, I have to say that in The Netherlands in the last ten years thinking about education has been enormously broadened and stimulated by the three political-educational prepared changes, I mentioned before. In a process of consciousness teachers and parents are in discussion about the question "What do we really want through our education and schooling?" Curriculumdevelopment emphasizes the question about the function of the school.

More than ten years ago (1969) Thomas F. Green*) described on the scene here how the school has different functions. The

*)Thomas F. Green, Schools and Communities: a look forward
Harvard Educational Review
Vol.39, No. 2, Spring 1969

real function of education and schooling till now in The Netherlands is that the school se'ects and nearly bottle-feeds some children to be the managers in the future at the one side and makes the majority of children to subordinates at the other side. The hidden power of trade and industry, the industrial circles and life, the military power, the Bank of England or elsewhere: all these institutions have a great influence upon curriculumdevelopment and the real schoolpractice.

I don't object all the intentions of this multinationals-curriculum, but I agree with Thomas Green when he was asking to give somewhat more attention to humanistic education.

I believe that another real function of education and schooling has to be and can be to humanize the children.

But we only attain that if the teachers are more cooperative and together they give to the kids the examples of teamwork and teamteaching. In inservice training courses we attempt on this point to reach another attitude in teachingbehaviours.

In The Netherlands complete schoolteams are enrolled in the inservice training courses (restricted to basic schools).

In these courses we follow a three phases strategy, wherein the question "How to function as a schoolteam?" has been emphasized. Shortly I explain you some main facts of this strategy.

The first phase is that the teachers as a schoolteam and as an individual member of the group have to clarify the existing schoolpractice.

In this first phase they learn to discuss with each other, because they haven't the skills for creating a good teacher-meeting.

In this first phase they learn how to make decisions together and how to describe what they have done to-day, yesterday, last week and what they want to carry out to-morrow and next week. They have to describe their own practice, but teachers have a big lack of description-skills.

We don't learn the teachers these skills by talking about theory. From the insights concerning curriculumtheory we develop several decisions games, and the most exciting game

is Blueprint Basicschool.
Blueprint Basicschool contains three parts.
In the first box teachers have to choose from cards the own real-compared teachinglearning situations and to select teaching-activities. But if they make their choices the intention is that later on all the teachers observe each other in real situations and discuss about the pointed choice and the observed practice. There are real big emotional discussions, but you cannot neglect that point. And it is the point of no return if you speak about teamwork.
The second box in Blueprint Basicschool activates the discussion how to arrange 8000 hours of basic education and to have decisions about spending of time to language arts, arithmetic, social studies, art education, health education, and so on.
But the teachers have to test several models of teaching too, related to different kinds of curriculummodels. And all the time they have to work together, to support and to consult each other.
The third box in Blueprint Basicschool contains fundamental statements about education. The schoolteam makes an own choice and the question is how consistent are the statements compared with the schoolpractice and activities.

That is the main point of the second phase in the strategy: to have actions. These actions can be to improve the existing schoolpractice or to change the schoolpractice based on another concept of schooling. Both actions need their own time and speed. Mostly teachers want to change too fast.
The third phase in the inservice training course is to consolidate and to confirm the activities in the schoolpractice referring to a continuous process of curriculumdevelopment.

What about the results? or in answer to Elliot Eisner's third question: What lessons can the curriculum theorist learn from the study of school practice?
I can give some short answers.
The curriculum theorist has to know that the differences between some schoolpractices he observes is about sixty years:

you meet a situation in practice that you can compare with teaching in 1930: selfcontained classrooms, high dependency of children to the teachers, behaviourtraining of the kids in atomistic ways and a finger-sound discipline of the teacher and you meet a practice that can be wished in the year 1990 or 2000: teamteaching, cooperation between teachers and pupils, independency and self-responsability for all the members in the schoolculture but in good social relationships, broadening of behaviour of the kids by more holistic views and a free-ruled schoolorganization.
So, if you want a quick result if you come in a 1930-situation, forget it: the process of attitude-change takes time over years and you have to be: not a trouble-maker but a very clever trouble-controller.
Another point is that policy-makers expect too much from the common teacher. In The Netherlands but elsewhere the teacher is a normal middle class man or woman: no less, no more. And the educational practice lies in the hand of this normal-gifted people. That is my point of departure for change and it means that sometimes it is worthwhile to leave the teacher there where he or she is.